

Farrar & Ball, LLP Wins \$32.8 Million Verdict in Rollover Case Against Cooper Tire



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Companies: [Cooper Tire & Rubber Co.](#)

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DES MOINES, Iowa, March 23 /PRNewswire/ -- A Polk County, Iowa, jury has issued a \$32.8 million verdict against Findlay, Ohio-based [Cooper Tire & Rubber Co.](#) (NYSE:CTB - News) in a lawsuit over a fatal 2007 vehicle rollover caused by tire tread separation.

Jurors in Judge Carla T. Schemmel's District Court found that Cooper Tire was responsible for the September 17, 2007, rollover crash of a 1997 Plymouth Grand Voyager van on Highway 65 between Des Moines and Marshalltown.

Attorneys [Kyle Farrar](#) and [Wesley Todd Ball](#) of the Houston trial law firm [Farrar & Ball, LLP](#) served as lead counsel for the six passengers involved in the car wreck and their families. They were assisted at trial by [Fred James](#) of the [James Law Firm](#) in Des Moines.

The vehicle rollover was caused by catastrophic tread separation on the van's left rear tire. The crash killed Assata Karlar, paralyzed Ivon Toe, and severely injured Josephine Cole, Sekou Jai, Jailah Nayou and Achol Deng Mawien.

The jury found that Cooper Tire defectively designed and manufactured the Cooper Lifeline Classic II tire, and evidence at trial showed that the rollover was caused by a defect in the tire that allowed part of the steel belt to rust and weaken over time. Jurors also heard evidence that despite safer alternatives, Cooper Tire executives delayed necessary changes in order to avoid additional costs of updating the tire's design.

"This is a case of a large corporation putting profits over people," says Mr. Ball. "We have documents in which the company's executives openly discuss the costs of improving the design of this tire, and unfortunately they decided that saving money was more important than saving lives."

The verdict was issued Friday, March 19, 2010, following four days of jury deliberations. The award in *Ivon Toe, et al. v. Cooper Tire and Rubber Company, et al.*, No. CL 106914, includes more than \$31.3 million in actual damages and \$1.5 million in punitive damages.

"We are grateful to the jury for making Cooper Tire take responsibility for their negligence," says Mr. Farrar. "Although nothing can make up for the terrible tragedy our clients have suffered, our hope is that this verdict sends a message to the entire industry that vehicle and passenger safety should be the number one priority."

Farrar & Ball, LLP is dedicated to helping those injured due to corporate neglect. The firm has developed extensive knowledge of tire and vehicle failures. To learn more, visit the firm's Web site at <http://www.fbtrial.com/index.html>.

For more information on the verdict, please contact Alan Bentrup at 800-559-4534 or alan@androvett.com.

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